

## MADURA PASS.

### AN EARLY ASSOCIATION.

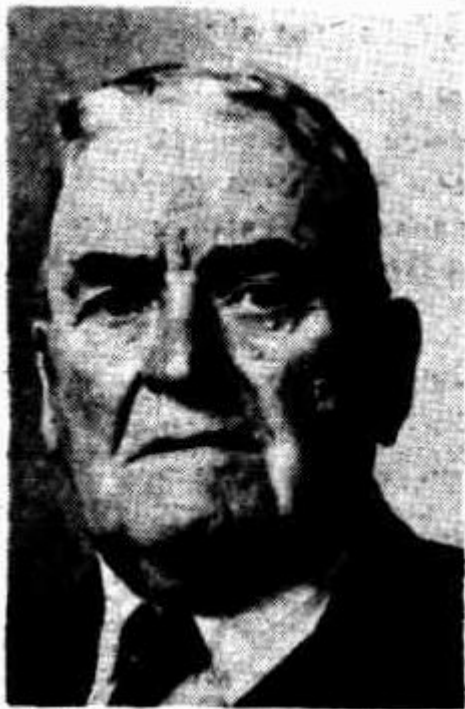
#### Alternative Track Suggested

Interesting comment on a paragraph which appeared in yesterday's issue of "The West Australian," stating that a recent storm had rendered Madura pass unfit for traffic, was made yesterday by Mr. James Grill, whose original association with what is now the pass dates back to 1902. He was afterwards boring inspector for the Commonwealth railways on the transcontinental line from 1914 to 1918, travelled frequently along the line as it was being constructed, and later did exploration work north of it.

Mr. Grill said that a better track than the one which traversed Madura was available for motorists. It was south of the transcontinental railway and followed Anketell's survey line across the

in 1902 to put down a deep artesian bore, and after the work was completed it was planned to take the plant to the proposed route of the railway and test the country for water. As there was no apparent way of transporting the heavy machinery up 300ft. cliffs, he went exploring, and found a valley which gave easy access up the almost perpendicular walls. This valley was now known as Madura pass.

To prepare a track through the valley at least five cases of dynamite were required, continued Mr. Grill, but the party only had 1½ cases. More had to be ordered immediately, but this meant delay. The dynamite could not be brought from Albany on the passenger boat, so it was dispatched on a sailing vessel from Adelaide, but during the voyage someone carelessly threw a match in some straw among which the explosive was stored. A fire broke out and the crew immediately threw the cases of dynamite overboard. Unable to wait, the party moved on. In the meantime a track was made up the pass—a job for which only £150 was allotted. The first load of boring material was taken up on a bullock waggon. The waggon was drawn by 12 bullocks.



Mr. J. GRILL.

Nullarbor plain. It could be picked up at Randalls or Karonie, and its maximum distance from the railway, which was only six miles, was south of Loongana. The track ran right through to Cook, which was about 80 miles east of the South Australian border. From Cook, he believed, there was a good motor track to Nullarbor station (at the head of the Bight), where the track joined the overland road to Adelaide.

Mr. Grill said he was sent to Madura in 1902 to put down a deep artesian bore, and after the work was completed it